

## **Voqal Submission Guidelines**

### **Core and Project Grants**

Applicants should consider the information below as a guide to submitting a proposal. Voqal reviews the application to make informed decisions about the merits of the project, its likelihood of achieving its stated goals, and the organization's capacity to effectively carry out the activities. Should a grant be approved, the grant agreement will incorporate the terms of the final proposal.

#### **Submission Format**

Upon initial invitation, registered applicants should submit their proposals and related information through Voqal's online grant portal. They should be prepared to work closely with program staff in revising and refining proposal materials before a final proposal is sent to the Board of Directors for review.

A completed proposal generally consists of the following parts, with some exceptions as deemed appropriate by program staff.

If your organization has applied to Voqal in the past, please use the current log-in credentials to access the organization profile. If your organization has not applied, you will first need to create a log-in account and organization profile by using the "Create New Account" button on the log-in page.

#### **SECTION 1: General Information**

To determine the appropriate application form, please answer the following questions as directed here.

- Is this grant in support of a donor collaborative or collective?
  - Answer: NO
- Is this grant to support or defeat a ballot measure?
  - Answer: NO
- Do you have a fiscal sponsor?
  - Answer YES or NO as applicable

You will also be asked to provide the name and title of the individual authorized to sign grant agreements for your organization.

#### **SECTION 2: Organization Details and Application Narrative**

The following outlines the questions on the application form with direction on what Voqal is seeking in each response.

##### Is this grant to support a project or provide core operational support?

Applicant will choose core or project support from a drop-down menu; program staff will provide guidance on which is appropriate for each application.

##### Grant name:

If project support, applicant will enter a name that briefly summarizes the project.

If core support, applicant will enter "Core Support."

**Core Support Grants:** Core support grants are to be spent toward the organization's general operating expenses, including staff salaries, to support the specific mission specified in the grant agreement.

**Project Grants:** Project grants are to be spent according to the proposal, schedule, budget, and conditions specified in the grant agreement.

##### What type of organization is this?

Applicant will choose the appropriate type from a drop-down menu, which includes: 501(c)3, 501(c)4, 527, 509, or other.

Amount Requested:

Applicant will enter the proposal amount as provided by program staff in the invitation.

Description Request:

Applicant will enter a concise summary of the organization's mission (core support) or the specific project (project support). Applicant should consider this the elevator pitch.

*Character limit: 500*

The Need and The Solution:

Applicant will describe the nature of the problem they seek to address and the proposed solution. Applicant should explain the current reality of its community and how their approach will make a difference.

*Character limit: 1,500*

Plan:

If for project support, applicant will describe specific actions and steps to complete the project, including outlining any collaborations with outside groups. If for core support, applicant will describe the organization's overall work plan to activate its mission. Applicant should be succinct, providing only details and information pertinent to someone with an outside perspective to understand the work.

*Character limit: 1,500*

Key Milestones:

Applicant will provide a timeline that includes 4-5 high level activities or key milestones during the grant period. Applicant should describe specific activities and actions they will take to be successful.

*Character limit: 1,500*

Alternatively, applicants can attach a document outlining the above; if applicant decides to attach a document, they should write "see attached" in the textbox.

Effectiveness:

Applicant will describe how they will determine success. Applicant should explain if they will use tangible measurements (such as number of phone calls to an elected official or number of event attendees), qualitative measures (such as increased staff capacity or narrative changes), or another method/tracking mechanism to track progress.

*Character limit: 1,500*

Collaboration:

Applicant will describe a recent partnership or collaboration to demonstrate its ability to work with aligned groups. Applicants should be specific in the goals of the collaboration and its own role in achieving the goals.

*Character limit: 1,500*

Cultural Competency and Sensitivity:

Applicants will describe how the organization makes decision and how the lived experience of those decision-makers affects the ultimate direction of the work.

*Character limit: 1,500*

Funding Impact:

Applicant will describe how funding will make a difference for the work. Applicant should explain what will be accomplished with an infusion of Voqal funding that would not be possible otherwise.

*Character limit: 500*

### **SECTION 3: Communication**

Please provide links to the following in the appropriate boxes:

- Facebook page
- Twitter handle/page
- Other online profiles
- Name, title, and email for the main communications staff contact

### **SECTION 4: Attachments**

**To avoid formatting issues, applicants should attach all files as a PDF.**

Project Budget:

If submitting the proposal for project funding, applicant should complete the *Project Budget Template* found [here](#). Applicant should demonstrate the total project costs and revenues, specifying Voqal's portion.

Operating Budget:

All applicants must submit their current fiscal year's operating budget, clearly indicating expected revenues and expenses.

Current Financial Statements:

All applicants must submit year-to-date (calendar or fiscal year) financial statements, including:

- Statement of Financial Position/Balance Sheet, clearly indicating current assets and liabilities
- Statement of Activities/Profit & Loss, clearly indicating current revenue and expenses

The timeframe covered in the financial statements must be specified. There is also a text box to describe any discrepancies or irregularities in statements that you would like Voqal staff to consider during the review.

Affiliate 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 information:

If an applicant has an affiliation with a counterpart entity, please provide the recently closed annual financial statements (calendar or fiscal year) for the counterpart. Please also describe the cost-sharing parameters.

Diversity Form:

All applicants must complete and attach, to the best of its ability, the *Diversity Form* found [here](#). Applicant should indicate staff and board member identities in the following categories: race/ethnicity, gender expression, and sexual identity. There is also space for applicants to add other characteristics/identities that may be relevant to demonstrating organizational alignment with social equity values and cultural competency (understanding the community it serves).

Supporting Documentation (optional):

At the applicant's discretion, attach supporting materials that demonstrate the organization's ability or plan to implement the work. Applicant may also attach materials that highlight past successes or media mentions.

**NOTE: Organizations with fiscal sponsors:** The above attachments should be for your organization/project ONLY. There is a separate section for attaching financial statements of the fiscal sponsor (see SECTION 5 below).

## **SECTION 5: Fiscal Sponsor**

If your organization has a fiscal sponsor, please provide or attach the following in the appropriate boxes:

- Fiscal sponsor name
- Fiscal sponsor contact name, title, and email
- Authorized Signer
- Fiscal sponsor mailing address
- Fiscal sponsor agreement
- Fiscal sponsor financials for the most recently closed year (calendar or fiscal):
  - Statement of Financial Position/Balance Sheet, clearly indicating current assets and liabilities
  - Statement of Activities/Profit & Loss, clearly indicating current revenue and expenses

## **General Information**

Voqal encourages applicants to contact staff with any questions or concerns while writing the application. Staff can help troubleshoot technical issues and provide guidance on question responses or program elements to highlight.

The reasons most proposals need follow-up before moving to the Board for consideration include:

- Unclear plan of action for how work will be conducted
- Unclear timeline
- Unclear metrics
- Missing attachments
- Unclear budget; does not clearly show all revenues and expenses for the project and/or organization

To avoid follow-up questions from staff, applicant should ensure all questions are thoroughly answered and check all applicable attachments are included. Please see the applicant checklist on page 5.

## **Contact Information**

### **Brenda Sears**

Contact for programmatic support for place-based proposals in Chicago and national work.

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### **Michele Christensen**

Contact for programmatic support for place-based proposal in Denver, Portland, and the Twin Cities.

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### **Mary Coleman**

Contact for technical support.

[mcoleman@voqal.org](mailto:mcoleman@voqal.org) | 303-351-7047

## Voqal Grant Application Checklist

Section	Direction	Complete
General Information	Answered questions about being a donor collaborative/collective, supporting a ballot campaign, and having a fiscal sponsor	
	Provided the name and title of the authorized signer	
Organization Details and Application Narrative	Indicated type of support (core or project) and choose a grant name	
	Indicated the type of organization and the amount requested	
	Answered narrative questions to demonstrate your plan of action and desired outcomes, as outlined on pages 1-2 of this document	
Communications	Provided links and information about your communication platforms and contacts	
Attachments	PROJECT GRANTS ONLY: Provided the Project Budget using Voqal template, clearly indicating anticipated revenue and expenses	
	ALL APPLICANTS: Provided the current operating budget for organization's fiscal year, clearly indicating anticipated revenue and expenses	
	ALL APPLICANTS: Provided current financial statements	
	ALL APPLICANTS: Provided financial statements for affiliated 501(c)3 or 501(c)4, if applicable	
	ALL APPLICANTS: Provided the Diversity Form, using the Voqal template	
	ALL APPLICANTS: Provided supporting documentation, if applicable	
Fiscal Sponsor, if applicable	Provided name, contact information, authorized signer, and mailing address of fiscal sponsor	
	Provided the fiscal sponsor agreement	
	Provided fiscal sponsor recently closed year-end financial statements	